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ABSTRACT

This set of guidelines published by the California State Department of Education Right to Read Unit is intended for principals setting up a Right to Read Program in their schools. Suggestions presented for the role of the principals prior to commitment to a Right to Read program include meeting with the Right to Read Local Education Agency Director (LEAD) to become familiar with the goals of the program, being sure that they support Right to Read's concept of staff involvement in planning and decision making, being certain that they understand the concept of long-range planning, and being certain that all staff members understand that Right to Read is not a separate activity. Further suggestions provided for the principals once they have committed their schools to participation in Right to Read include supporting and becoming actively involved in the planning process; providing a non-threatening environment where open staff discussion, interaction, input, and feedback can take place; modeling to change behavior of staff members; reinforcing staff members frequently; and calling on their LEAD or regional directors whenever a question or concern arises. (WR)

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GUIDELINES FOR A RIGHT TO READ PRINCIPAL

Before committing yourself and your staff to Right to Read:

1. Meet with the Right to Read Local Education Agency Director (LEAD) in your district to familiarize yourself with the Right to Read Program. If desirable, the LEAD can give an "overview" of the Right to Read Program to your staff.

2. Be certain that you support Right to Read's concept of staff involvement in planning and decision-making.

3. Be certain that your staff understands the concept of long-range planning, is willing to consider revising or changing their reading program, and is willing to put time and energy into this effort.

4. If your school is participating in funded programs (such as ESEA, ECE, SB 90, etc.), be certain that all staff members understand that Right to Read is not a separate activity, but is a management system that can be used to help plan any of these programs. If the Right to Read services are used efficiently, there should be no work above or beyond the State requirements for needs assessment and comprehensive program planning.

Once your school is committed to participating in Right to Read, the role of the principal includes the following:

1. It is mandatory that you be openly supportive and actively involved in the planning process. It is, however, not necessary, and perhaps not advisable, that you do the bulk of organizational and paper work connected with the Program Planning Procedure. You should designate responsibility for specific tasks to individuals or specially-selected groups. Keep in mind that involvement of individual staff members is only beneficial to the process if the total staff is constantly involved in input, feedback, and decision-making.

2. You, as the school leader, should provide a non-threatening environment where open staff discussion, interaction, input, and feedback can take place.

3. If you "model" change behavior be discussing, considering, and being open to changes in your own role in the school reading program, staff members are likely to follow the example.

4. Reinforce staff members frequently, remembering that it is difficult for teachers to engage in long-range planning when they are used to daily planning.

5. Call on your LEAD or regional Director at any time you have a question on concern.

CS 001 464